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or deceitful when brought face to face with the government is false. There were conspirators enough on the Continent, but most of those who risked their lives in England were simply and honestly actuated by spiritual aims. Yet, even so, the situation was tragic in its impossibility of adjustment. The "bloody question", whether, in case of invasion, the missionary would hold to the party of the queen or that of the pope, was one which the government could hardly fail to put, the more so that the missionary priest was the adviser of the Catholic laity, and to give either answer was, to most missionaries, to risk soul or body. The persecutions under Elizabeth, cruel as they were, were marked by a statesmanlike policy absent from those of Mary and from those of contemporary Continental sovereigns, and by a relatively small number of victims.

The author shows, as has never been so conclusively exhibited before, that plots to murder Elizabeth, though not originating with the pope, had the full sympathy and moral support of Gregory XIII. His account of the Armada is valuable, but here he is on more familiar ground. Its defeat he ascribes justly to the skill of the English seamen and their new naval tactics. Lastly he sketches with great insight the quarrels in the ranks of the English Catholics themselves between the secular priesthood and the Jesuits, and the diverse policies, national and religious, pursued by the rival factions. The value of the volume is increased by a large appendix of hitherto unpublished documents, and a chronological list of manuscript sources, chiefly in Rome, with indication where they may be found. The two further volumes, in which the author proposes to continue his studies to 1689, will be awaited with anticipation.

WILLISTON WALKER.

*The Reconstruction of the English Church.* By ROLAND G. USHER, Ph.D., Instructor in History, Washington University. In two volumes. (New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1910. Pp. ix, 423; vi, 426.)

As in political, so in church history, it used to be the earlier part of Queen Elizabeth's reign which attracted the special interest of researchers. Father H. N. Birt has only recently reminded us that "the Elizabethan *religious* settlement" continues to be a fighting ground for Protestant and Catholic historians. Mr. Usher may claim the merit of drawing our attention to the less conspicuous problems of the *constitutional* settlement of the Church. He holds that the constitutional question was not seriously grappled with before the times of the great reorganizer, Archbishop Bancroft, the hero of his book. "Few things are more difficult for us to comprehend, who have been brought up to believe that the English Church was established in its present form by Elizabeth, than the great scope of the reconstruction of 1604" (I. 357). If his thesis is provable at all, Mr. Usher certainly is the man to do it

and to introduce a new reading into our ideas of English church history. His researches are solid, extensive, and critical. He has made use of unprinted materials—part of which are published as appendices to the second volume—to a much greater extent than other students in this section of church history. With all his minuteness, however, he never loses himself in mere detail, always combining painstaking statistical work with a broad view of the subject. Although, in a few cases, he goes perhaps a little too far in filling up gaps of tradition by means of supposition, he is, on the whole, careful to realize the limits of attainable knowledge. His judgment is sound and unbiassed. He is equally fair to the Anglican, the Puritan, and the Catholic, though his inward sympathy is on the side of the Church. It is his large, dispassionate view of all parties, his clear insight into the motive powers of Elizabethan and Jacobean church life, together with a great amount of new material, that will secure to these volumes unanimous recognition as a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the subject. This worth will not be lessened, even if the leading idea of the book should not be received in such a full sense as the author wishes to have it recognized.

The arrangement of the work is, partly, a weak point. Though it is easy and pleasant to read, as far as its style is concerned, which is always clear and often noble, the author is, at least in the first and third books, not as fortunate in the arrangement of his vast materials. What he offers in the first book is, for the greater part, a series of separate essays, well shaped in themselves, united under a common heading, but lacking either a cogent logical connection or chronological order. Besides, in some of these essays, the contents only to a small extent coincide with their respective titles. These deficiencies, enhanced through the absence of a detailed table of contents, make it at times difficult to find out where a certain topic is treated.

The first book, "Preparation for Reconstruction" (1583-1603) plainly shows the constitutional defectiveness of the Elizabethan Church, hitherto not realized to its full extent. After all, if the Church stood its ground during the queen's long and stormy reign, it may be juridically correct, but certainly not historically adequate, to describe its constitution as a legal chaos, or as a series of temporary makeshifts of disputable validity, still requiring fundamental "reconstruction". Perhaps the most important, certainly the most difficult task, undertaken in the first book, is the attempt to show, on statistical foundations, the proportional strength and the geographical distribution of Anglicans, Catholics, and Puritans. Even he who cannot agree with all of Mr. Usher's conjectures, will admire the amount of reliable work which is evidenced in three maps of England, showing the distribution of Catholic laymen, of Puritan ministers, and of Churchmen in 1603. The most impugnable point seems to me to be the author's conception of Catholic and Puritan forces in relation to the total of the English population. He gives the Puritans "perhaps fifty thousand able-bodied men" (I. 280); this equals,

counting families, say, 200,000 souls, or about one-twentieth of the whole population. As for the number of Catholics, after admitting that he has not found any satisfactory information, he hazards a guess of "750,000 or 1,000,000" (I. 159), *i. e.*, about one fourth or one fifth of England! If these figures are correct, the development under James I. and Charles I. becomes a puzzle. I am unable to verify the statistics of the Puritan party; but perhaps I may mention that for the Catholics, approaching the problem from another side than Mr. Usher does, I have arrived at the low figure of 120,000 or little more.<sup>1</sup>

The second, comparatively short book, "Reconstruction", leads to the culminating point of the development, giving as it does an excellent, minutely detailed account of the English church history during the important years 1603 to 1605. The chief interest is concentrated upon the Hampton Court conference, the canons of 1604 and the visitation articles of 1605. The canons, in the author's opinion, are as epoch-making in the history of the English Church as the divorce of Catharine of Aragon and the Elizabethan Act of Supremacy. It seems quite possible to me to accept nearly every single statement of Mr. Usher's investigation, and still to decline his general conclusion as the exaggerated form of a sound idea. What Bancroft achieved was much indeed and may only now be fully appreciated: he did away with the legal discrepancies of the Elizabethan period; he drew a clear limit to the Church's dominion by codifying its constitution; and he introduced a regular administration instead of a system of more or less extraordinary measures. But all this may be described rather as the completion of the interior of a building already outwardly finished, than as a total "reconstruction", as Mr. Usher insists on calling it.

The third book, "Vindication of Reconstruction", covers the last five years of Bancroft's primacy (1605-1610). It shows how Puritans and Catholics, Parliament and law courts were each affected through the legal changes undergone by the Church in the preceding years. It further shows the improvement in the administration and in the economical and moral state of the Church itself. With this, it contains some topics which are only indirectly connected with the subject, such as the history of the Gunpowder Plot, the Oath of Allegiance, and the hierarchic organization of the Catholics. It is difficult not to persuade one's self that these subjects are dealt with here only because the "Reconstruction" of the English Church is to the author identical with the history of Bancroft's primacy. If we reduce this favorite idea of Mr. Usher's to its proper limit, we may gratefully admit that we owe to his laborious researches a valuable modification of our views of Elizabethan and Jacobean church history.

A. O. MEYER.

<sup>1</sup> In a book recently published, *England und die Katholische Kirche unter Elisabeth* (Rome, Loescher and Company, 1911).